

What's the Cost?

Ready:

Esther sent this reply to Mordecai: "Go and assemble all the Jews who can be found in Susa and fast for me. Don't eat or drink for three days, night and day. I and my female servants will also fast in the same way. After that, I will go to the king even if it is against the law. If I perish, I perish." Esther 4:15-16

Set

As athletes, we know the cost associated with excelling in sports. We sacrifice our bodies and endure muscle aches and injury to get stronger. We practice hours every day, often sacrificing other things, to refine our skills.

What is the cost of following God? The story of Esther gives us a glimpse. King Ahasuerus (Xerxes) crowned Esther queen, unaware that she was Jewish. Soon after, Haman (the king's right-hand man) ordered all Jews living in 127 provinces be killed. Esther's cousin pleaded with her to approach the king on their behalf. At that time, anyone who approached the king without being summoned could be put to death. Esther, realizing God had put her in a position to spare the Jewish nation, demonstrated her commitment to God, even when it meant possibly sacrificing her life.

Though we may not be called to save an entire nation, we are called to sacrifice our lives to follow God. Jesus' disciples dropped everything and followed Him, leaving their jobs, families, friends, and homes. In Matthew 16:24 Christ says, "If anyone wants to come with Me, he must deny himself, take up his cross, and follow Me."

Go

1. What does it mean to deny yourself and take up your cross?
2. How did God honor Esther's obedience?
3. Are you willing to surrender your life to follow Jesus?

Workout Esther 5:10; Matthew 16:25-26; Romans 12:1; 14:7-8; Galatians 2:20

Overtime Lord, I want to sacrifice daily to follow You. Help me be as bold as Esther was in obedience to You. I know it won't always be easy, but show me how to deny myself and follow You. Amen.



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